



Rottingdean Parish Council

Minutes of the Rottingdean Annual Village Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr John (Chair), Cllr Sheppard (Vice Chair), Cllr Fenwick, Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Levins, Cllr Turnbull.

Ward Cllr Mary Mears

Caroline Vitta (Youth Work Manager) and Alex Amos, Trust for Developing Communities.

18 Residents

Chris Hayes Parish Clerk (minutes).

Agenda

1. **To pass a resolution to permit Parish & City Councillors who do not reside within the Parish to speak at the meeting but not to vote.**
 - i **Cllr John (Chair)** proposed the resolution, which was seconded by **Cllr Sheppard** and passed unanimously.

2. **Declarations of interest in agenda items.**

None

3. **Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on 19 April 2019.**

Agreed

4. **Matters arising from the Annual Village Meeting held on 19 April 2019.**

None

5. **Chair's report – Councillor Sue John.**

Cllr John (Chair) said that the past year had been dominated by Covid 19 but the village residents and businesses had rallied round. **Cllr John (Chair)** said the year had been particularly hard on young people and although on average Rottingdean residents were 10% older than the Brighton and Hove population as a whole, new housing developments on the site of the former St Aubyns school and the land South of Falmer Road, Meadow Vale, could change the demographic. In this context it was important to understand the support available to young people. **Cllr John (Chair)** said she was therefore particularly pleased to welcome Caroline Vitta and Alex [Amos?] from the Trust for Developing Communities to the meeting to talk about their work in supporting young people.

6. **Guest Speaker: Caroline Vitta, Youth Work Manager (East Brighton), Trust for Developing Communities.**

Caroline said the work of the Trust was essentially to work with communities to develop community-led solutions to local issues and make communities better. Caroline said her focus was on supporting young people throughout the Saltdean and Rottingdean area including working with Saltdean and Woodingdean Youth Clubs and Rottingdean Football Club. She explained that the Trust provided volunteers to support youth activities, were able to provide some funding and advice on other support services. Caroline said one of the key parts of her work was getting out and about to meet young people that had been crucial over the last year as much of the support system for them had not been available with youth clubs and other activities unable to open. For many young people last summer had been one of isolation, boredom and difficulties in schoolwork, particularly for those whose home circumstances were not conducive to on-line learning. Caroline said she had spent a great deal of her time over the last year out and about looking for where young people were hanging out and trying to persuade them to engage with activities. She had also responded to several calls about young people who were creating problems and had attended Connor's Court on a couple of occasions.

Alex said he had been with the Trust for about a year during which support services had been extremely limited. He said he had been involved in:

- The Food and Warmth hamper initiative delivering 60 hampers to deprived homes.
- Working with Woodingdean Youth Club providing support as they reopened.
- An initiative to share experiences of the last 12 months across generations with young people exchanging letters with older people.
- The young leaders' groups (aged 12) engaging in various fun activities.
- Detached sessions engaging with young people as services started to open up again.

Caroline said that residents could help by letting the Trust know where people were hanging out and by providing ideas for activities.

7. **Cllr John (Chair)** asked for questions from the audience.
- i **Geoff Rodrigues** asked what age group the Trust focusses on, what issues came up and how they approached young people. Caroline said 10-15 year olds were the focus of their work and the key was to engage with young people on their own terms. In the main the issues were finding somewhere to go, things to do and a safe space to communicate to get the right sort of support.
 - ii **Isobel Rodrigues** asked if the Trust had the facilities to deal with mental health issues given the high level of anxiety suffered by young people over the last year. Caroline said they were able to carry out welfare and wellbeing checks and refer people to support services although many services had suffered cutbacks recently.
 - iii **Cllr Sheppard** said that in his experience a significant problem for young people had been finding places to meet up and that adults often became anxious at the sight of groups of young people hanging around. Caroline said that all were welcome to come out with Caroline on her visits and observe how young people were approached and their reaction. She said most were surprised and welcomed the engagement, but an open-minded approach was needed. Caroline stressed that it was important to be cautious in approaching groups of young people if there were personal safety concerns.
 - iv **Cllr Lawrence** asked what provision was available for under 18s. Caroline said that it was difficult to find sometimes, and there seemed to be little space available for young people to gather and socialise. The Trust had relied heavily on the Woodingdean and Saltdean Youth Clubs and Rottingdean Football Club. Caroline asked the meeting to let her know of any space that the Trust could use, including storage space which was desperately needed.
8. **Cllr John (Chair)** thanked Caroline and Alex and reminded them that the Parish Council had a small grant pot that could support youth activities.
9. **Report back from Advisory Groups**
- i Strategy and Communications. Cllr John (Chair) gave the following update:
 - The Parish Council website had been improved and much more use was being made of social media channels.
 - Parish Council meetings had been held by Zoom and it was pleasing to see increased participation by residents.
 - The Neighbourhood Plan consultation had taken place and the Parish Council were considering over 50 responses before submitting the Plan to Brighton and Hove City Council.

- The Parish Council continued to work with Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) on air quality management and in a recent meeting had agreed to extend the current High Street measures given that emerging evidence on traffic flow and air quality suggested the measures were having a positive effect.

Tom Cotcher said he was concerned about the planter on the High Street that had caused a traffic build up, effectively pushing the air quality problems further north along the High Street. **Cllr John (Chair)** said that the problem had been the two lines of static traffic in the High Street which the planter had solved by making north bound traffic flow smoothly.

Jerry Sice said he was deeply concerned about the safety aspects of the proposal for pedestrians crossing the road, particularly children. He said vehicles regularly mounted the pavement as traffic attempted to navigate the planter and the measures were depriving the village of a functioning High Street.

Cllr John (Chair) said that HGV traffic had dramatically reduced. **Cllr Sheppard** added that it had to be recognised that Rottingdean had not been built with traffic in mind and the Parish Council were doing what they could in the circumstances to manage the tension between traffic flow and air quality. He also commented that the signage at the Woodingdean junction was to be changed to redirect HGV traffic away from the village.

- ii Planning **Cllr Sheppard** explained that the Parish Council was a Statutory Consultee for all planning applications within the Parish boundary and said that the Planning Consultative Panel had considered 70 applications during the year. The group visited every site and invited residents with concerns about planning applications or wishing to make an application to contact them. He said that recently the Consultative Panel had spoken to the developer of the Meadow Vale site about the appearance of the houses within that development. **Cllr Lawrence** commented that a great deal of building work was going on in Rottingdean at the moment and it was important that people planning work on their properties talk to their neighbours.
- iii Village Community Advisory Group. **Cllr Fenwick** said it been quite a difficult year as the group had not been able to access people. She said at the Clean Air Day that had been held in the summer, councillors had been out in the High Street speaking to people about how what they could do to help the environment. **Cllr Fenwick** said further well-being initiatives were being considered, in particular a proposal to gather the recollections and experiences of Parish residents during the past twelve months. She said that Cllr Lawrence continued to work with the various environmental groups in the village to help coordinate their activity and the Village Community group were looking to increase and improve noticeboards around the village. In addition, **Cllr Fenwick** said the group had reviewed and approved a number of grant applications.

iv Built Environment Working Group. **Cllr Sheppard** that the group had dealt with over 100 issues during the year that included:

- Sorting out the storm drains at the end of Dean Court Road
- Several hedges overhanging pavements.
- Resurfacing work on roads and repainting of road markings
- A number of requests for dedicated benches
- Repaired the Jubilee sign at the bottom of Bazehill Road

Cllr Sheppard said if residents saw any repairs that were needed to signage, roads or other infrastructure they should report this to the Parish Council who would take it up with BHCC.

Tom Cotcher asked for an update on the refurbishment of Park Road toilets. **Cllr John (Chair)** said that the Parish Council had £50,000 earmarked for the refurbishment and were waiting for an electricity box to be removed before work could begin which would hopefully happen in the next few weeks.

Natural Environment Working Group. **Cllr Turnbull** gave the following update:

- Work continued to progress on the undercliff area and the seafront.
- The Parish Council had led a campaign to review the tenancy of beach chalets following which BHCC had decided to remove indefinite leases for non residents and set a maximum of 8 year leases for residents.
- Work was planned to improve access around the village pond by extending the path adjacent to the Plough public house and adding a disabled parking space.
- Rottingdean had made a substantial response to BHCC consultation on the Downland Estate Plan. **Cllr Turnbull** said he was to attend a one-day seminar on the emerging plans.
- The debate on future grazing plans for Beacon Hill had eased with an on-site meeting planned for people who had raised a petition against proposed changes, RPC and BHCC councillors and officials.
- Work had started on the longstanding aim to improve the Lower High Street. The original plan had been confined to the Quarter Deck area but an urban design company, Urban Movement, had now been commissioned to produce a Design Concept for the whole area including access to the seafront. The company had been chosen because of their skill in managing consultation, the first stage of which had begun with stakeholder representatives. This would be followed by wider consultation with local traders and residents and all parish residents as design plans developed.

Cllr Sheppard said residents of St Margaret's had expressed concern at the potential noise from greater use by the local businesses of outdoor space on the Lower High Street. Cllr Turnbull said that the secretary of St Margaret's had been one of the early consultees, but he would ensure this feedback was taken on board.

10. **Cllr John (Chair)** asked for further questions.

- i **Margaret Howard** asked if a disabled parking space could be placed in Recreation Ground car park. **Cllr John (Chair)** said the Parish Council would look into it.

Action: To investigate the possibility for a disabled parking space at the recreation ground

- ii The Parish Clerk said that resident **Barbara Webb** had raised a concern with him regarding the state of the village pond. Ms Webb said it was looking untidy, particularly the banks and vegetation. **Cllr Turnbull** said the contractor looking after the Pond had focussed over the last year on refurbishment of the duck island, but he would ask him to look at the encroaching vegetation.

11. There being no further questions **Cllr John (Chair)** thanked those present for their contributions and closed the meeting, reminding everyone that the next Parish Council meeting would be the Annual General Meeting scheduled for Tuesday the 4 May.

Parish Clerk chris.hayes@rottingdean-pc.gov.uk

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